

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 310927 TOSEC 340015

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAIRO 17750 ACTION SECSTATE INFO JIDDA
KHARTOUM TRIPOLI 27 DEC 76

QUOTE S E C R E T CAIRO 17750

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US SU

SUBJ: FAHMY QUERY RE US POLICY TOWARDS SUDAN

1. AS REPORTED ELSEWHERE, FAHMY SUMMONED ME ON CHRISTMAS DAY. ONE OF THE SUBJECTS HE WISHED TO DISCUSS WAS THE SUDAN. HE PROFESSED TO BE PUZZLED ABOUT OUR POLICY TOWARD THE SUDAN AND ASKED FOR A CLEAR STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT. WHOM DO WE SUPPORT IN THE SUDAN? BOTH SSADAT AND HE, FAHMY CLAIMED, DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO IN THE SUDAN.

2. ALLUDING TO ALLEGED TRADITIONAL US SUPPORT FOR THE MAHDI FAMILY (WHICH HE HAS OFTEN CHARGED), FAHMY READ
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ME A REPORT PURPORTEDLY GIVEN THE EGYPTIANS BY AN UNIDENTIFIED INFORMANT WHO WAS DESCRIBED ONLY AS "ONE OF THE MAHDI PEOPLE." THE INFORMANT CLAIMED THAT THREE LIBYANS--SALAH AL-DURAH (LIBYAN INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST FOR SUDAN), ABU ZAID DARDARI (LIBYAN SECURITY CHIEF) AND SOMEONE NAMED AL-ZAWI (NOT

IDENTIFIED)--RECENTLY MET IN LIVERPOOL WITH SADIQ AL-MAHDI, SHERIF HUSSEIN HINDI, AHMED ZAIN AL ABDIN AND OMAR NUR EL-DAYIM TO DISCUSS NEW PLANS AGAINST THE NUMEIRI GOVT. MOREOVER, ACCORDING TO THE EGYPTIAN INFORMANT, THE MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY "THREE AMERICANS FROM CIA," ONE OF WHOSE NAMES WAS GIVEN AS COGAN. THE SUDANESE DELEGATION, REPORTEDLY SUPPORTED BY THE AMERICANS, HAD WISHED TO CONVINCE THE LIBYANS TO EARMARK LARGE SUMS OF MONEY FOR SUPERVISION IN THE SUDAN. FAHMY SAID THAT HE DOUBTED THE REPORT, BUT IN VIEW OF ITS SERIOUSNESS FELT HE HAD TO APPRISE US OF IT.

3. I TOLD FAHMY I WAS GLAD THAT HE HIMSELF DOUBTED THE REPORT. HAD HE BELIEVED IT, I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT HE HAD BEEN READING TOO MANY SPY STORIES LATELY. I HAD TO INFORMATION ABOUT SUCH A MEETING, BUT I COULD CONFIDENTLY ASSURE HIM THERE IS NO USG ACTIVITY, OVERT OR COVERT, DIRECTED AGAINST PRESIDENT NUMEIRI. ON THE CONTRARY, NUMEIRI HAS RECENTLY VISITED THE UNITED STATES AND THE USG HAS BEEN LOOKING FOR WAYS OF SUPPORTING HIM. WE HAD DISCUSSED WITH OUR EGYPTIAN FRIENDS THE WHOLE MATTER OF SUPPORT FOR NUMEIRI LAST SUMMER, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ABORTIVE REVOLUTION. OUR AMBASSADOR IN KHARTOUM IS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE SUDANESE GOVT TO SEE HOW WE CAN HELP. IT WAS RIDICULOUS TO SUGGEST THAT WE ARE SUPPORTING NUMEIRI WITH ONE HAND AND HIS OPPONENTS WITH THE OTHER.

4. FAHMY REITERATED THAT HE WAS SURE THE REPORT WAS WRONG, BUT AGAIN ASKED FOR A STATEMENT OF OUR POLICY AND OUR CONTACTS WITH THE SUDAN. WITH WHOM ARE OUR
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PEOPLE DEALING? I TOLD HIM THAT IT HAS NEVER BEEN A QUESTION OF DROPPING THE MAHDI SINCE WE HAVE NEVER SUPPORTED HIM AGAINST NUMEIRI OR THE LEGITIMATE GOVT OF THE SUDAN. THIS PROMPTED FAHMY TO COMMENT THAT THE SAUDIS SUPPORT THE MAHDI AND HE WONDERED IF THEY MAY HAVE PERSUADED US TO DO LIKEWISE. I RECALLED THAT DURING MY TIME IN SAUDI ARABIA, THE SAUDIS HAD INDEED SUPPORTED THE MAHDI AT A TIME WHEN THE CENTRAL GOVT IN KHARTOUM WAS LEFTIST ORIENTED. I DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THE SAUDIS WERE STILL DOING SO, BUT NOTED THEY HAVE RECENTLY ALSO PROVIDED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO NUMEIRI. IF THE EGYPTIANS HAVE ANY QUESTION ON THIS SCORE, WHY NOT ASK THE SAUDIS DIRECTLY? FAHMY SAID HE INTENDS TO DO SO, BUT REPEATEDLY STRESSED GOE SENSITIVITY TO SUDANESE DEVELOPMENTS AND THE NEED FOR BOTH GOE AND USG TO SEEK WAYS OF STRENGTHENING NUMEIRI.

5. REQUEST DEPT PROVIDE STATEMENT TO BE GIVEN TO GOE ON

OUR CURRENT POLICY AND ACTIVITIES IN THE SUDAN.

EILTS

UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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NNN

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